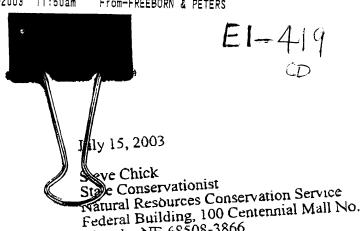
f:



Lincoln, NE 68508-3866

USDA NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE

Project as described will have NO ENFIRE? prime farmiands or wetherds on author lands IF PROJECT DESIGN CHANCES AND MADE, PLEASE SURMIT PLANS FOR

REVIEW.

Surfuce Transportation Board Docket No. AB-6 (Sub-No. 405X); The Burlington Northern and Santa Fe Railway Company Re: Abandonment from Pawnee, Nebraska to Endicott, Nebraska

Atturneys at Law

311 South Wacker Drive Suite 3000 Chicago, Illinois 60606-6677 Tel 312,360 6000

Michael A Smith Senior Counsel Direct 312 360 6724 Fax 312 360 6598 @drimzm freehornpeters com

Chicago

Springfield

Dear Mr. Chick:

On or after August 4, 2003, we are filing with the Surface Transportation Board ("STB") a Petition for Exemption seeking authority to abandon railroad line between railroad milepost 57.80 near Pawnee, Pawnee County, Nebraska and milepost 117.03 near Endicott, Jefferson County, Nebraska which traverses through United States Postal ZIP Codes 68420, 68323, 68381, 68466, 68310, 68415, 68342, 68352 and 68350. Attached are an Environmental and Historic Report describing the proposed action and any expected environmental or historic effects, as well as a map of the affected area.

We are providing this report so that you may review the information that will form the basis for the STB's independent environmental analysis of this proceeding. If any of the information is misleading or incorrect, if you believe that perment information is missing, or if you have any questions about the Board's environmental review process, please contact the Section of Environmental Analysis (SEA), Surface Transportation Board, 1925 K Street, N.W., Room 504, Washington, D.C. 20423-0001, telephone (202) 565-1538 and refer to the above Docket Number. Because the applicable statutes and regulations impose stringent deadlines for processing this action, your written comments to SEA, with a copy to our representative would be appreciated within three weeks.

Your comments will be considered by the Board in evaluating the environmental and/or historic preservation impacts of the contemplated action. If there are any questions concerning this proposal, please contact our representative directly. Our representative in this matter is Michael Smith who may be contacted by telephone at (312) 360-6724 or by mail at 311 S. Wacker Dr, Suite 3000, Chicago, Illinois 60606-6677.

Mich Int

Freeborn & Peters

Allurneys at Luw

311 South Wacker Drive **Suite 3000** Chicago, IL 60606-6677 312,360,6000 Fax 312.360,6520

FAX COVER SHEET

PLEASE DELIVER TO

Christa Dean The Surface Transportation Board (202) 565-9000

DATE

December 31, 2003

TIME

TOTAL PAGES WITH COVER

2

CLIENT/MATTER NO.

SENT FROM

Brian Nettles direct dial. 312.360.6336 return fax: 312 360,6596

MESSAGE

Enclosed is a response from the Natural Resources Conservation Service regarding the affects the abandonment may have on prime agriculture the for the Pawnee, NE to Endicott, NE abandonment, AB-6 (Sub-No. 405X)

OTHER OFFICES

217 East Monroe Street Suite 101 Springfield, 1L 62701-1147 217,535,1060 Fax 217,535 1069

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